CLAIMS

1. A method of assaying for peptide-specific T-cells, which method comprises providing a fluid containing T-cells, adding a peptide to the fluid, incubating the fluid to cause cytokine release, and detecting the released cytokine.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, which method comprises providing the fluid containing T-cells in contact with a surface carrying an immobilised first antibody to the cytokine, adding the peptide to the fluid, incubating the resulting fluid mixture under conditions to cause any peptide-specific T-cells that have been pre-sensitised to the peptide to secrete the cytokine, and detecting any secreted cytokine bound to the immobilised first antibody.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the T-cells are peripheral blood mononuclear cells.

4. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the peptide-specific T-cells are CD8+ or CD4+ cells and the cytokine is IFN-γ .

5. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the peptide is 7 - 15 amino acid residues in length.

6. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the resulting fluid mixture is incubated under non-sterile conditions.

7. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the peptide is a known epitope.

8. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the T-cells are taken from a patient known to be suffering, or to have suffered from, infection with an intracellular pathogen.

9. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8, performed to monitor progress of HIV infection.

10. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8, performed to monitor the effect of a vaccine.

11. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8, performed to determine a pathogen-derived epitope targeted by CD4+ or CD8+ T cells.

12. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 11, applied to the study of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV or influenza.